

Introduction

My friend Kathy once sent me an excerpt from the book *Dandelion Wine*. In Ray Bradbury's book about one vintage summer, a boy has taken ill. No one can figure out what is wrong. He's simply overwhelmed by life. No one seems able to help him until Mr. Jonas, the junk man, comes along.

He whispers to the boy who lies asleep on a cot in the yard. Mr. Jonas tells him to rest quiet and listen, then reaches up and picks an apple off a tree. He lingers long enough to tell the boy a secret he carries inside him, one I didn't know I carried in me. Some folks arrive in this world fragile. Like tender fruit, they bruise easier, cry more often, and turn sad young. Mr. Jonas knows all this because he's one of those people. The words stir something in the boy and he recovers. The words stirred something in me. Some people bruise easier. I'm one of those people.